

Rainproofing Checklist for Homeowners

Follow these 10 easy steps to keep your basement dry:

- Grab an umbrella and go outside during a heavy rain to see how and where the water flows from the eaves, downspouts, and paved surfaces.
- Make sure the ground around the foundation slopes away. Re-grade all areas (paved or landscaped) to ensure water flows away.
- Clean **eavestroughs** in the fall after leaves have fallen and again in June after seeds and flowers have dropped.
- Consider a **permeable option** when driveways, parking lots or other paved areas need resurfacing.
- Redirect downspouts and rain barrel overflows onto a permeable surface (lawn, garden, or infiltration feature) at least **2.4 meters (8')** away and down slope from the foundation.
- Clear **storm drains on your street** regularly, especially before heavy storms and during spring melt.
- Schedule an inspection by a licensed plumber to determine if you have **sewer backflow prevention** - if not, have it installed. At the same time ask the plumber to use a CCTV camera to check sewer laterals for blockage from tree roots and/or fats and other solids that go down the drain.
- When renovating basement areas, choose **flooring and wall finish options** that are **not absorbent**, like ceramic tiles (avoid carpet, drywall, and paperboard), and use area rugs that can be removed for drying and cleaning.
- Choose basement furniture that is **elevated on legs** to avoid absorbing water during flooding or infiltration.
- Keep all stored goods and electrical devices **elevated on shelves** off the basement floor.



If you have redirected downspouts and improved grading and are still experiencing infiltration, have a sump hole and pump installed to drain water from foundation weeping tile. Maintain it regularly and replace when necessary. During rain events, **check periodically that the sump pump is operating properly**. When you are away, arrange for a friend or neighbor to check this for you. If you are at high risk of infiltration, **do not** finish your basement for living. Move **absorbent items** (furniture, carpet, boxes) to a dry location upstairs. **High risk factors** for your home or building include:

- ◆ Paved areas that slope towards the foundation that cannot immediately be fixed
- ◆ Being the lowest building on the street
- ◆ Being built on a floodplain or an area with a high water table
- ◆ A foundation of masonry or fieldstone



Don't have a rain barrel?

You can purchase a rain barrel at your local hardware store or online at rainbarrel.ca.

Interested in learning more? Explore these additional resources:

- ◆ Find out other ways that you can manage rainwater by visiting the **Toronto and Region Conservation Authority** website.
- ◆ Take the **Rain is a Resource online course** to learn more about green infrastructure as a method of stormwater management.
- ◆ Attend the virtual **Rain Garden Master Class** to learn how to build and design your own rain garden.

Rainproofing Checklist for Commercial and Institutional Properties

Follow these 10 easy steps to reduce flood risk and protect water quality:

- Ensure roof drains, eaves, oil and grit separators, and other storm drains are clear of debris at all times.
- Direct downspouts to permeable areas to soak up rain and to reduce icing hazards.
- Require snow removal contractors to have **Smart About Salt training**.
- Consider installing **permeable features** such as dry ponds, rain gardens, bioswales, infiltration galleries and/or permeable paving.
- Have **vehicles washed and maintained at licensed facilities** where spill and effluent containment are required by law.
- Provide **ashtrays** at designated smoking areas to contain cigarette butts.
- Ensure **spill containment systems and plans** are in place for fuels and other hazardous materials.
- Maintain **stormwater management features** like oil and grit separators, ponds, and permeable features as per recommended schedule.
- Remove **animal waste** from paved areas.
- Consider installing a **rainwater harvesting system**.



Interested in learning more?

Take the virtual **Rain is a Resource online course** or the **Rain Garden Master Class** to learn more about green infrastructure and how to design your own rain garden.

Revised in 2021. Document originally created with support and funding from the Co-operators insurance group.